December 3, 1956

Dear Roger:

Thank you for your letter of Nov. 29. I am glad to see you and Gunny are moving ahead. The treatise will fill a deeply felt need, and noone else could do a better job of it. I do hope your participation will be more than supervisory. All success!

Roger- I'd like very much to renew a collaboration with you in this or any other area, but I am afraid it will be impossible Because of impossible conflicts in time. 1.) Esther and I will be travelling for five months next year on several trips. I don't see how I'm going to finish what I already have to do. [We hope to see you about June 1 if you're in Berkeley then]. I've had to decline or postpone several other engagements that would have been very attractive otherwise. 2). My 'creative' energies are being exhausted right now by a review or monograph on bacterial recombination, roughly equivalent to your chapters 3-9: this is already keeping my out of the lab in a way that distresses my conscience and inclination ~~already~~, and will take the next couple of months to finish. 3) If any time or energy is left over, I owe it to Cavalli and the book we're supposed to be writing. In these circumstances it would not only be foolhardy to take on another assignment, but I just couldn't deliver on any promises I did make.

As to chapter 8, I would have recommended Dr. Bradley to you in any case. He will do a workmanlike job of it.

I agree that a chapter 9 is absolutely essential, as your monographers are bound to go off in their special directions, unless you can get them to correlate their mss. It would not be any easy job to do independently of the others. If you don't find another solution, or someone within or beyond your present lineup to do it, the only expedient I could suggest might be a verbatim incorporation of my own review. I am not sure it is suitably organized for this purpose, as there would be considerable overlap with the other chapters; in addition, I have not settled all the plans for its publication, and there might be a commercial conflict. However, if these obstacles ~~should~~ seem ~~as~~ less formidable a couple of months from now, and you have not made a more satisfactory arrangement, may I contact you further on the feasibility of lifting some sections and transposing them as Chap. 9. Don't let this rather far-fetched suggestion forestall your own secondary plans.

To change the subject, no, Pardee has not written to me, and I would be interested to hear what he has to say. However, I did run into Park, and he has an ms. in press (Science) on the identification of D-alanine and the new amino-sugar (Strange's carboxyethyl glucosamine) both in the UDP-conjugates and in the cell walls. Penicillin doesn't have to inhibit the polymerase, and the UDP-conjugates may be a relic of the synthesis of the monomers, rather than direct intermediates in the polymerization: we'll know this for sure when the wall-building enzyme is isolated.

see how to get around this kind of effect of penicillin, direct or indirect. (Has Bernie Davis told you how E. coli diamino-pimelicless forms protoplasts?)

see how to get around a wall-formation effect of penicillin, direct or indirect. We have been following up the growth of L-colonies of marked coli strains in agar (not in broth.), and are on the trail of a variety of wall-defective mutants which we hope to tie in with some immunogenetic work as a sort of biochemical genetics of walls. However, the protoplasts and L-colonies have been quite disappointing so far in regard to any new genetic interactions between strains or with DNA. But Sol has some hot stuff on RNA effects! What about your work with protoplasts?

Our own pathway in this work has been the cultivation of the L-forms of marked

Sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg